

CARQUINEZ STRAIT



PRESERVATION TRUST

Commission Members
State of California
Delta Protection Commission
P.O. Box 530
Walnut Grove, CA 95690

December 12, 2008

Dear Commission Members:

The Board of Directors of the Carquinez Strait Preservation Trust (Trust) would like to discuss with the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) the potential of jointly pursuing a National Heritage Area designation for the Delta and Carquinez Strait. It has been a long standing goal of the Trust to receive a National Heritage designation for the Carquinez Strait region. We have been in conversation with Linda Stonier of the National Park District for several months in the development of our suitability/feasibility study, and learned a few months ago that the Commission was also pursuing a Heritage Area designation for the Delta. We have met with Linda Fiack to learn more about the Delta Protection Commission and your Heritage Designation efforts. We believe that working together will prove to be mutually beneficial.

The Carquinez Strait Preservation Trust was established in 1994. The Trust was the result of a collaborative process between the Crockett Cogeneration Facility, the counties of Solano and Contra Costa, the cities of Benicia, Hercules, Martinez and Vallejo, East Bay Regional Parks, and the State Lands Commission to further the work of educating the public and developing and implementing regional planning efforts for the Carquinez Strait region. Generally the Carquinez Strait Region encompasses a part of San Pablo Bay starting from the Hercules-Pinole City boundary, and the Napa-Solano County Boundary and continues east to encompass a portion of Suisun Bay from Pierce Harbor to Suisun Slough in Solano County to the Point Edith State Wildlife Area in Contra Costa County. The distance inland varies by jurisdiction.

The mission of the Trust is to further the preservation, promotion, and recognition of the Carquinez Strait as an important State and National resources and recreation area. Over the last 14 years the Trust has taken on a number of activities to promote recognition of the Strait

through recreational and educational events. A narrative slide show was presented throughout the Carquinez Strait region to promote recognition of Strait's value and opportunities, and highlight its numerous venues. In coordination with this effort the Trust successfully coordinated several "Celebrate the Strait" events. These month-long events showcased various city and non-profit activities including hikes, boat cruises, tours, festivals, and bird watching. In 1996 the Trust published the book *Gateway to the Inland Coast – The Story of the Carquinez Strait*. The book covers regional heritage, resources and current uses. In conjunction with the book a Carquinez Strait Resource Plan was also prepared.

As a waterway for transportation and commerce and home to unique landscapes and aquatic habitats the Delta and the Carquinez Strait regions have much in common. The Commission's July 2008 National Heritage Areas draft concept paper, listed a number of possible heritage themes, which we have also explored include: the estuary, Pacific Flyway stopover location, and gold rush corridor from San Francisco to Sacramento.

Additionally, the Delta and the Strait shared an early symbiotic agricultural relationship. Grain and produce grown in the Delta was processed and stored in grain warehouses, flour mills, and canning facilities that once flourished on the shores of the Strait. The fishing industry was also an early component of both the Strait and the Delta, with the Strait housing numerous canning facilities.

Both areas share a rich history and are dotted with historic communities made up of historic houses, commercial structures and colorful characters significant in our State's history. The first railroad ferry crossing was established in Port Costa in Contra Costa County and Benicia in Solano County, and the first federal Arsenal on the West Coast was established in the City of Benicia in Solano County. The Pony Express crossed the Strait in Benicia to make its way from Sacramento to San Francisco.

Today the Delta and Strait are linked through a network of national, state, and regional trails. The Delta and the Strait form a corridor from the rivers to the Bay connected by the water that flows through them. The geographic proximity, climate, history, and ecology, of the two regions are complimentary and together tell a unique story of what we call "the inland coast". It would be advantageous for our two regions to work together to share knowledge, political capital, and financial resources for a common goal. We are hopeful that you and your Board are willing to discuss this matter in the near future. Please contact Belinda Smith, staff to the Trust at 925 899-0261 or by email at bsmitgo@sbcglobal.net to advise us of the Commission's decision on this matter.

Sincerely,


Bonnie Silveria and Kathy Hoffman
Co-Presidents

CC: Linda Fiack, Executive Director